

Blair-Taylor Elementary School Family Handbook



2025-26

MISSION: To educate all learners to reach their
potential as productive citizens

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Welcome to the 2025–26 School Year!

Dear Blair-Taylor Families,

On behalf of the entire elementary staff, welcome to a new school year! We are excited to partner with you in supporting your child's learning, growth, and success throughout the 2025–26 school year.

We encourage you to stay connected by visiting our school website at <https://www.btsd.k12.wi.us/schools/> and by following us on Facebook for updates, reminders, and celebrations of student learning and achievement.

This student handbook was created to answer many of the common questions families have and to outline the expectations and policies that guide our school community. Inside, you'll find important information about daily routines, school rules, safety procedures, and other key topics that help us create a positive and productive learning environment.

While this handbook reflects many of the official policies of the Blair-Taylor School District and Board of Education, it also serves as a practical resource to help your family navigate the school year. Please review it with your child so everyone feels informed and prepared.

At Blair-Taylor Elementary, our mission is to create a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment where every student is encouraged to grow, challenged to achieve, and inspired to be their best.

We work together—as students, staff, and families—to build a community that values: Kindness, curiosity, honesty, responsibility, and respect.

Through high expectations, strong relationships, and a commitment to lifelong learning, we empower students to succeed in school and in life.

We look forward to working closely with you this year. Thank you for being a vital part of our school community—we're glad you're here!

Sincerely,

Jared McCutchen
Elementary Principal

Blair-Taylor Elementary Staff

Jared McCutchen, Elementary Principal
Lindsay Burgau, Administrative Assistant
Becky Brouillet, Special Education Director
Julie Nehring, Administrative Assistant
Jenny Semb, School Nurse
Kim Nehring, 4K
Justina Gatusch, 4K
Jenna Kowalke, Kindergarten
Brittany Scholl, Kindergarten
Cassandra Cable, 1st grade
Carlie Frei, 1st grade
Stacy Spors, 1st grade
Kari Lejcher, 2nd grade
Maddie Kendall, 2nd grade
Jordyn Walters, 2nd grade
Darrin Briggs, 3rd grade
Ariel Koxlien, 3rd grade
Kathy Luchterhand, 3rd grade
Abby Palkowski, 4th grade
Andy Nehring, 4th grade
Chelsea Stephenson, 5th grade
Amie Stewart, 5th grade

Cassie Hammond, Reading Specialist/Coach
Kris Smith, Reading Interventionist
Jennifer Murphy, Special Education
Amber Frederixon, Special Education
Lindsay Bryhn, Special Education
Kendra Budish, Art
Lauren Koss, Physical Education
Julie Gappa, Music
Breanna Baker, School Counselor
Erica Anderson, School Social Worker
Billie Koxlien, Headstart
Lori Lisowski, Headstart
Karen Robertson, Headstart
Kim Serum, Headstart
Kris McNamer, LMC
Rebecca Iverson, Paraprofessional
Samantha Anderson, Paraprofessional
Ella Gelder, Paraprofessional
Karen Husmoen, Paraprofessional
Tracey Larson, Paraprofessional
Cindy Peterson, Paraprofessional
Kathy Smikrud, Paraprofessional

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Blair-Taylor 2025-26						
August 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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June 2026						
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<div> <div>No School</div> <div>Orientation Day (August 27)</div> <div>Transition Days (August 28, 29)</div> <div>Start/End of Each Trimester</div> <div>Inservice Days - August 19, 20, 21 (TVC Joint), 26, September 22, October 17, January 23, February 27, April 24</div> <div>TVC 2.0 Joint Inservice</div> <div>Elementary PT Conferences - 3:30pm-7:00pm</div> <div>MS/HS PT Conferences - 3:30pm-7:30pm</div> </div>						

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL TIMES

Arrival

- 7:45 a.m. – Elementary school doors open.
- 7:45–8:00 a.m. – Breakfast is served in the elementary commons.
- 8:00 a.m. – Classes begin. Please ensure students arrive on time and are ready to learn.

Dismissal

- 3:03 p.m. – 4K students dismissed
- 3:04 p.m. – Kindergarten & Grade 1
- 3:06 p.m. – Grades 2 & 3
- 3:08 p.m. – Grades 4 & 5
- 3:10 p.m. – Middle/High School students
- 3:15 p.m. – Buses depart

For safety, please follow all school pick-up and drop-off procedures and ensure students are picked up promptly after dismissal.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Blair-Taylor Elementary is committed to creating a school environment that is inclusive and respectful for all students. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital/parental status, sexual orientation, sex (including gender identity), or physical, emotional, mental, or learning disabilities.

This applies to all school activities, expectations, and discipline. A formal process is available to address concerns, but we encourage open and informal communication to resolve any issues.

For questions, contact:

Mr. Lynn Halverson, Superintendent
Blair-Taylor School District
N31024 Elland Road, Blair, WI 54616
(608) 989-2525

See School Board Policy #2260.01 for more details.

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In case of weather-related closings or delays, announcements will be made by **6:00 a.m.** on local radio and TV stations, including:

- WKTY 580 AM
- WAXX 104.5 FM
- WHTL 102.3 FM
- WKBT Channel 8
- WEAU Channel 13
- WXOW Channel 19

An **all-call message** will also be sent to families through the school system. Please ensure your contact information is current.

BUSES

Bus transportation is an extension of the school environment, and all students must follow safety and behavior expectations:

- Be respectful, use appropriate language, and follow directions.
- Stay seated while the bus is moving.
- Keep personal items on your lap.
- No weapons, glass, live animals, lighters/matches, or smoking/vaping items allowed.
- No food or drinks during regular routes.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects inside the bus at all times.
- Do not throw anything inside or from the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.

Bus Changes: Students must have a written note from a parent/guardian to ride a different bus. **Bus drivers** have the authority to assign seats and enforce rules. Misbehavior may result in loss of bus privileges.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

If your child needs to take **any medication** at school (including over-the-counter items like Tylenol), the following must be on file:

1. A **note from the parent/guardian** stating the dose, time, and reason.
2. A **doctor's written order** for prescription medication.

All medication will be stored and dispensed through the school office or nurse. Students are **not allowed** to carry medication, keep it in lockers, or share with others.

If your child uses **crutches, a wheelchair, or carries a backpack due to medical reasons**, a doctor's note is also required. [School Board Policy #5330](#)

ILLNESS GUIDELINES

To keep everyone healthy, please keep your child home if they have:

- **Fever over 100.4°F** – Return when fever-free for 24 hours without medication.
- **Vomiting** – Return 24 hours after last episode.
- **Diarrhea** – Same as above.
- **Persistent cough or difficulty breathing.**
- **New rash with a fever** – Return after rash resolves or with doctor clearance.
- **Skin infections/sores** – Stay home if sores are open, spreading, or can't be covered with a bandage.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All students must meet Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) immunization requirements. This includes providing:

- Proof of vaccination
- A signed waiver (for medical, religious, or personal beliefs)

Key Deadlines:

- By the 30th school day – Evidence of at least the first required dose or a waiver.
- By the 90th school day – Evidence of all required doses or updated waiver.

If documentation is missing, parents will receive notices on the 15th and 25th school days. Non-compliance may result in legal penalties.

For more details, see School Board Policy #5320.

ATTENDANCE

Consistent attendance is one of the most important factors in a child's success at school—and later in life on the job. When students are frequently absent, it becomes difficult for them to keep up with classroom learning, and catching up can be stressful.

Trying to make up for lost time and learning can be very stressful for students.

That's why we work closely with parents and guardians to support strong, regular attendance for every student.

According to both the **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction** and **Blair-Taylor School Board Policy**, families are allowed to excuse up to **10 days of school per year**. After 10 excused absences, any additional absences may be considered *unexcused* unless they are supported by **medical or legal documentation**.

We encourage families to schedule appointments outside of the school day whenever possible. If an appointment must take place during school hours, we recommend having your child attend as much of the day as possible.

If your child reaches **8 total absences**—whether excused or unexcused—you will receive a letter from the school. This is **NOT** a truancy notice; it is simply to make you aware that your child has missed a significant number of days.

If attendance concerns continue after the letter is sent, a meeting will be scheduled with the school principal to discuss support and next steps. These procedures are required by **school board, county, and state** policies.

Please help us by making attendance a priority—it truly makes a difference!

[School Board Policy #5200](#)

SAFETY DRILLS: FIRE, TORNADO, LOCKDOWN

To ensure student safety, Blair-Taylor Elementary regularly practices emergency drills:

- **Fire Drills** – Conducted monthly, as required by state law. Students exit calmly to assigned locations.
- **Tornado Drills** – Students move to designated shelter areas and cover their heads.
- **ALICE Drills** – ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. These drills prepare students for emergencies like intruders and include age-appropriate discussion and procedures.

Your child's safety is our top priority. Please talk to them about the importance of these drills.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We strongly **discourage elementary students from bringing personal electronic devices** to school—this includes items like **cell phones, iPads, earbuds, and similar devices**. These items are often unnecessary during the school day, and the school **cannot be held responsible** for any lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.

Use of electronic devices at school is considered a **privilege, not a right**. Students must have permission from a school staff member to use **any electronic device**, including those issued by the school.

School-issued devices (such as Chromebooks or iPads) are for educational use only. All activity on these devices—including Google accounts, email, internet use, and more—**may be monitored at any time**.

Students are expected to follow the **Wildcat Way** when using any device. This means that all of the following must be school-appropriate:

- **Language** used in documents, messages, or music lyrics
- **Images** and photos
- **Websites** visited
- **Content downloaded**

For more information on what is allowed and not allowed, please review our **Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy** (School Board Policy #7540).

MILK, BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Nutritious meals help students focus and learn. Blair-Taylor Elementary offers breakfast and lunch daily to all students. Families are encouraged to fill out the **Free and Reduced Lunch Application**—this helps with eligibility and supports school funding, even if you don't plan to use meal benefits.

Breakfast

- **Time:** 7:45–8:00 a.m.
- **Location:** Elementary Commons

Meal Prices

Milk

- \$0.40

Breakfast

- 4K–5th Grade: \$1.75

Lunch

- 4K–5th Grade: \$2.65

Students are encouraged to eat school meals or bring healthy lunches from home. Please contact the office with any allergy concerns.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

We value strong partnerships between home and school. **Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year**, and all families are encouraged to attend:

Fall Conferences

- Tuesday, October 14: 3:30–7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, October 16: 3:30–7:30 p.m.

Spring Conferences

- Tuesday, February 24: 3:30–7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, February 26: 3:30–7:30 p.m.

Can't make those dates? Reach out to your child's teacher to schedule a conference at a more convenient time—we're happy to work with you.

CHANGES IN FAMILY INFORMATION

It's important that the school has accurate and up-to-date **contact information**. Please notify the elementary office right away if you change:

- Phone numbers
- Home address
- Emergency contacts
- Family structure (e.g. custody, guardianship)

Having the right information ensures we can reach you quickly in case of emergencies or important updates.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

By law, all school staff are required to report any **suspected abuse or neglect** of a child, including:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional harm
- Threats of harm
- Neglect of basic needs

Reports made in good faith protect staff from liability. Our first priority is always student safety and well-being.

[School Board Policy #8462](#)

COLD WEATHER GEAR

Students go outside for recess **unless the temperature or wind chill is below 0°F**. Please send your child dressed appropriately for the weather:

- Warm coat
- Snow pants
- Boots
- Gloves or mittens
- Hat

Labeling clothing with your child's name helps us return lost items quickly.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost something? Found something?

- **Turn in found items** to the school office or lost-and-found area.
- **Check the lost and found regularly** for missing items.
- Items not claimed by the end of each semester will be donated.

Tip: Label coats, hats, lunch boxes, and other belongings with your child's name to make it easier to return lost items.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

At Blair-Taylor Elementary, we believe that students learn best in an environment that is **respectful, responsible, safe, and honest**—the core values of our **Wildcat Way**. These expectations apply throughout the school day and in every area of the building. Clear behavior guidelines (called matrices) are posted and taught in locations such as classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, and the playground.

Respectful Behavior

All students are expected to treat classmates, staff, and others with kindness and respect at all times. If a student shows aggressive or hurtful behavior—either in person or online—that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power, it may be considered harassment or bullying, which is strictly prohibited under School Board Policies #0145, #5516, #5517, and #5517.01. We encourage students to report any disrespectful, harassing, or bullying behavior to a trusted adult right away.

Distraction-Free Learning Environment

For learning to take place, classrooms must be safe, calm, and focused. Students are expected to:

- Respect personal and school property
- Take pride in their work
- Try their best
- Show courtesy and decency to others

When student behavior disrupts learning, teachers will work to redirect the behavior in a positive way. If the behavior continues or poses a safety risk, the student may be **removed from the classroom and sent to the office** for further support and reflection.

Our goal is always to work together with students and families to support positive choices and help every student succeed—academically, socially, and emotionally.

DRESS CODE

At Blair-Taylor Elementary, we believe that **appropriate dress, good grooming, and respectful behavior** all contribute to a positive, focused, and safe learning environment. Following our dress expectations helps create a place where all students can learn without unnecessary distractions or discomfort.

According to **School Board Policy #5511**, student clothing and accessories should:

- Be appropriate for school
- Not cause disruptions to learning
- Support a respectful and harassment-free environment

General Guidelines for Student Attire

These expectations help guide what is considered appropriate for daily school activities. While not every situation can be listed, here are key points:

- **Tops** must cover the midsection (stomach and back) and reach below the waistband of pants or skirts.
- **Shorts, dresses, and skirts** should be at least **mid-thigh length or longer**, including the location of any holes in jeans.
- **Underwear (including bra straps)** should not be visible. Shirts should also cover the **underarm area**.
- **Straps** on shirts must be **at least two fingers wide**. No tube tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops, or one-shoulder shirts.
- **Backs and chest areas** should remain covered.
- **Messages or images** on clothing must be school appropriate. Clothing that promotes **alcohol, drugs, violence, discrimination**, or contains **obscene, profane, or sexually**

suggestive content is not allowed.

- **Shoes** must be worn at all times for safety reasons. **Tennis shoes are required for P.E.** class.
- The following are **not allowed during the school day**:
 - Coats or outerwear
 - Hats or headgear (unless for medical/religious reasons)
 - Sunglasses
 - Spiked jewelry or chains

If a Student's Clothing is Inappropriate

If a student wears something that doesn't meet dress code expectations:

- They will be asked to **change or cover up**.
- The school can **provide clothing** if needed.
- If a student **refuses to change**, they may be removed from class and **sent home**, which could result in an **unexcused absence**.

We appreciate your support in helping students dress for success each day! If you have questions about what's appropriate, feel free to reach out to the school office.

[School Board Policy #5511](#)

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, & TOBACCO

Blair-Taylor Elementary has a **zero-tolerance policy** for:

- *Alcohol*
- *Tobacco/nicotine products (including vapes)*
- *Illegal drugs and controlled substances*
- *Drug paraphernalia*

WEAPONS

Weapons and **look-alike weapons** are **not allowed** on school property, buses, or at school events. Violations may result in **police involvement** and **possible expulsion** from school. School Board Policy #5772

SEARCHES

To keep our school safe, any property belonging to the Blair-Taylor School District—including cubbies, school-issued technology, or materials—may be searched at any time.

If there is a safety concern, **student privacy may be overridden** to prevent harm. Items that are unsafe or inappropriate for school will be taken and held by staff.

[School Board Policy #5771](#)

PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We ask that all families review the Parent Handbook together and return the form below to acknowledge your understanding.

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form

I have read this handbook and discussed the contents with my student. We understand my student is required by board policy to follow these expectations.

Parent/Guardian

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX A: ATTENDANCE

Excused Absences:

1. Blair-Taylor School Board of Education Policy #5200 addresses student attendance and provides examples of excusable reasons for absences from school including:
 - a. **Physical or Mental Condition:** The student is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend a school program.
 - b. **Obtaining Religious Instruction:** To enable the student to obtain religious instruction outside the school during the required school period.
 - c. **Permission of Parent:** The student has been excused by his/her parent before the absence for a reason deemed necessary by the parent. A student may not be excused for more than ten (10) days per school year by the parent or guardian and must complete any course work missed during the absence.
 - d. **Religious Holiday:** For observance of a religious holiday consistent with the student's creed or belief.
 - e. **Suspension or Expulsion:** The student has been suspended or expelled.
 - f. **Program or Curriculum Modification:** The Board has excused the student from regular school attendance to participate in a program or curriculum modification leading to high school graduation or a high school equivalency diploma as provided by State law.
 - g. **High School Equivalency – Secured Facilities:** The Board has excused a student from regular school attendance to participate in a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma in a secured correctional facility, a secured child caring institution, a secure detention facility, or a juvenile portion of a county jail, and the student and his/her parent agrees that the student will continue to participate in such a program.
 - h. **Child at Risk:** The student is a "child at risk" as defined under State law and is participating in a program at a technical college on either a part-time or full-time basis leading to high school graduation, as provided under State law.

Pre-Arranged Absences: A Pre-Arranged Absence form must be filled out and turned in to the office before attending one of the following events: a school-sponsored event that is longer than one day and any non-school sponsored event, including a family vacation, playoff, state tournament, or visit to an institute of higher education. A student may be excused for one visit to an institute of higher education per year.

Pre-Arranged absences for Athletic Events: Students attending a playoff or state tournament with a coach must have participated in that sport for the entire length of the sports season. A student not attending with a coach who wishes to attend a playoff or state tournament will be excused only if they attend with an adult family member. (Adult means 21 or older and family means brother, sister, aunt, uncle, parents or grandparents). Other circumstances must be pre-approved by the principal. All detention time must be made up prior to leaving to attend a playoff or tournament event or it will be treated as an unexcused absence.

The principal retains the right to determine that the absences will be **unexcused if the student is not in good standing** in their classes. A discussion between the student and principal will take place prior to the event.

Student Procedures Following an Absence:

1. Upon returning to school after an absence, students are required to report to the office before the first bell with a written explanation of the absence from their parents or guardians, unless the absence has received prior approval or notification. Students must allow sufficient time to receive the admit slip and still report to class on time. Students who fail to provide an excuse from a parent or guardian upon returning to school will have the absence recorded as unexcused. A

student will have one week after returning to school to bring in an excuse and have the unexcused absence changed to an excused absence.

2. Students who were absent are expected to make up the missed work within the time allotted by the teacher. Students will be given the opportunity to make up scheduled tests.

Unexcused Absences (Truancy):

1. Unexcused absences are defined as follows:
 - a. Truancy is defined by Wis. Statute. #118.16 (c) as, "Truancy means any absence of part or all of one or more days from school during which the school attendance officer (principal) has not been notified of the legal cause of such absence by the parent or guardian of the absent pupil."
 - b. Any absence after which a student fails to provide a parent/guardian excuse within one week.
 - c. "Unexcused absences" beyond the five (5) day limit per trimester or ten (10) day limit per year will be considered "habitual truancy" (Wisconsin State Statute 118.16) and may be reported to the County District Attorney or Human Services.

Blair-Taylor School Board Policy states that absences excused by a parent or guardian **beyond ten (10)** days per school year may be considered unexcused unless medical or legal documentation is provided that supports the absences.

Truancy Procedures:

1. Parents are notified of their child's absences daily by telephone.
2. When a student has a combination of excused and unexcused absences beyond seven (7) days, an attendance notification letter will be sent to the parent or guardian recommending a statement from the doctor for any additional absences due to illness to be excused.
3. When a student has been excused by a parent more than ten (10) days per year, an attendance notification letter will be sent to the parent or guardian requiring medical or legal documentation.
4. Unexcused absences will begin the habitual truancy process, and a notification letter will be sent home.
5. The school is obligated to report habitual truancy to the Trempealeau or Jackson County District Attorney or Human Services Department.
6. If the district attorney finds the student habitually truant, fines can be assessed to the parent or guardian with other possible student sanctions such as driver's license suspension. These consequences may be repeated during the school year if the problem with truancy continues.

Tardiness:

1. Punctuality is considered a necessary habit by employers! Students are expected to be on time.
2. Arriving within fifteen (15) minutes of the beginning of the school day is considered tardy unless an acceptable excuse is provided.
3. After the first class period of the day, students who are late to a class (five minutes or less) without a pass are considered tardy. Students who are more than five (5) minutes late for a class without a pass are considered absent (unexcused).
4. High school students who are tardy more than three (3) times during the week will receive a 45-minute detention, which must be served before or after school by Wednesday of the following week.
5. Middle school students who are tardy more than three (3) times during the week will receive closed noon on Tuesday of the following week.
6. Students who have more than eight (8) tardies in a month who did not exceed three (3) tardies weekly will also receive a 45 minute detention.

APPENDIX B: WISCONSIN STATE STATUTES AND BLAIR-TAYLOR SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Alcohol: The using, possessing, selling, or furnishing of alcohol during the school day, anywhere on school premises, or at any school-sponsored event will result in the student being suspended. Parents or guardians will be notified and a referral made to the police. Any student who comes to school or any school activity under the influence of alcohol will fall under this policy (Wisconsin State Statute #125.09 & School Board Policy #5530).

Controlled Substances: Using, possessing, selling, or furnishing of non-prescribed drugs, chemicals, or illegal substances during the school day, anywhere on school grounds, or any school-sponsored event by any student at any time is expressly prohibited (Wisconsin State Statute #161 & School Board Policy #5530). An automatic referral will be made to the police for breaking this law. Parents or guardians will also be contacted. Students involved will be suspended with the possibility of an expulsion hearing.

Fire & Weapons: Wisconsin State Statute #941 deals with crimes against public health and safety. Students who bring any weapons, who are negligent with fire or give false alarms will be immediately suspended pending possible expulsion proceedings and criminal and/or civil action (School Board Policy #5572).

Harassment & Disorderly Conduct: Wisconsin State Statute #947 covers crimes against peace, order, and other interests. Harassment is defined as striking, shoving, kicking, or otherwise subjecting another person to physical contact or attempts or threats to do the same—in other words, "fighting." Disorderly conduct is defined as whoever in a public or private place, engages in violent, abusive, indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, or otherwise disorderly conduct. Under circumstances in which the conduct tends to cause or provoke a disturbance, the student is guilty of a Class "B" misdemeanor. Students doing such acts may be suspended immediately and may be issued a citation by police (School Board Policies #5517 & #5530).

Laser Pointers: According to Wisconsin State Statute #941.299 (2)(b), laser lights have been proven to cause eye injuries and are banned from school premises. Laser pointers will be confiscated and the owner may receive a detention.

Stealing: Consequences of stealing may include, but are not limited to, detention, suspension, and/or referral to the police. In addition, the student may be required to repair or replace the stolen item. (Wisconsin State Statute #943.20)

Tobacco: The use or possession of tobacco products (smoking, vaping, or chewing) during the school day, on school property, or at school-sponsored activities is expressly forbidden (Wisconsin State Statute #48.983 & 134.66 and School Board Policy #5512.). In April of 1992, the Wisconsin Legislature passed a law making it illegal for persons under the age of 18 to possess cigarettes or tobacco products. Any school staff member may confiscate any tobacco product if seen or found on a student while on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity. Students found with tobacco products during the school day may be suspended up to five (5) days and may be cited by the police. Parents or guardians will also be contacted.

Vandalism: Crimes against property fall under Wis. Statute #943. Students who deliberately damage the school's buildings, property or equipment, deface textbooks, electronic devices, or damage the property of teachers or students, will be required to pay for all damages and will be reported to their parents/guardians and the police if appropriate. Students who accidentally break or lose something not belonging to them will be required to pay for its replacement and/or repair. Students threatening or attempting extortion towards others also falls under this statute. Any student caught extorting money or favors from another person will be immediately suspended and reported to the proper authorities.

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL BOARD POLICY #5517.01 BULLYING

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, including at any of the school buildings or other property used exclusively or in part, whether leased or owned by the District, for the purpose of school-related functions or events; or while traveling to or from school or to and from school-sponsored functions or events; in transporting vehicles arranged for by School District officials. The policy applies as well during activities that occur off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the supervision of school authorities, or where an employee is engaged in school business, or where there is otherwise a connection to the school such that the conduct at issue affects or is intended to affect the student's educational environment.

Definitions

"Bullying"

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation, or harm. Bullying may be a repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. Furthermore, it may be serious enough to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic, or family status; however this type of prohibited bullying behavior need not be based on any of those particular or other particular characteristics. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to such behaviors as stalking, cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercing, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Some examples of Bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name-calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation.
- D. "Cyberbullying" – the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone, and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal websites, and defamatory online personal polling websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others."

The Board recognizes that cyberbullying can be particularly devastating to young people because:

- 1. cyberbullies more easily hide behind the anonymity that the Internet provides;
- 2. cyberbullies spread their hurtful messages to a very wide audience with remarkable speed;
- 3. cyberbullies do not have to own their own actions, as it is usually very difficult to identify cyberbullies because of screen names, so they do not fear being punished for their actions; and
- 4. the reflection time that once existed between the planning of a prank – or a serious stunt – and its commission has all but been erased when it comes to cyberbullying activity;
- 5. cyberbullies hack into or otherwise gain access to another's electronic accounts (e-mails, social media, etc.) and posing as that individual with the intent to embarrass or harm the individual.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. posting slurs or rumors or other disparaging remarks about a student on a website or on weblog;
2. sending an e-mail or instant messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to drive up the victim's cell phone bill;
3. using a camera phone to take and send embarrassing photographs of students;
4. posting misleading or fake photographs of students on websites.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written, or physical nature on the basis of sex, (including transgender status, change of sex, or gender identity), race, color, national origin, religion, creed, ancestry, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other characteristic protected by Federal or State civil rights laws. Harassment is prohibited by Policy 5517 – Student Anti-Harassment.

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For a definition of and instances that could possibly be construed as hazing, consult Policy 5516.

Complaint Procedures

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the District Administrator. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the District Administrator. Complaints against the District Administrator should be filed with the Board President.

Complaints against a Board member shall be filed with the Board President unless the complaint is against the President in which case the complaint shall be filed with the District Administrator, who is authorized to contact District legal counsel for assistance in handling the complaint.

Every student is encouraged to report any situation that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying are required to report these acts to the building principal or assistant principal, or the District Administrator.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously and a clear account of the incident is to be documented. A written record of the report, including all pertinent details, will be made by the recipient of the report.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this Policy shall be investigated promptly by the Principal. The staff member who is investigating the report of bullying shall interview the victim(s) of the alleged bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report.

If during an investigation of a reported act of bullying in accordance with this Policy, the principal determines that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment, discrimination, and/or may have constituted harassment based on sex (transgender status, change of sex, or gender identity), race, color, national origin, religion, creed, ancestry, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other characteristic protected by Federal or state civil rights laws, the principal will report the act of bullying to one of the Compliance Officers who

shall assume responsibility to investigate the allegation in accordance with Policy 5517 – Student Anti-Harassment or Policy 2260 - Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity. Additionally, complaints alleging sexual harassment on the basis of sex are also covered by and subject to the investigation procedures in Policy 2266 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities. If the investigation under Policy 5517 - Student Anti-harassment, Policy 2260 - Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity or Policy 2266 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities does not substantiate harassment based on one (1) or more of the Protected Classes, the complaint of bullying shall still be investigated under this Policy.

With regard to complaints received against the District Administrator (or a member of the Board), the investigation shall be referred to the Board attorney who shall conduct a prompt investigation. The Board attorney is authorized to designate an outside third party to conduct the investigation. The Board attorney or designee will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) business days after receipt of the information or complaint. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The Board attorney or designee conducting the investigation shall notify the complainant and parents as appropriate, (in writing,) when the investigation is concluded and the findings made.

Parents of each student involved in the bullying report will be notified prior to the conclusion of the investigation. The District shall maintain the confidentiality of the report and any related student records to the extent required by law.

If the investigation finds that bullying has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include student discipline, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, or possible expulsion. Further, the result of an investigation that finds that bullying has occurred may result in discharge for employees, an exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

Retaliation/False Reports

Retaliation against any person who reports is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying. Making intentionally false reports about bullying for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally making a false report may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Privacy/Confidentiality

The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against who the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to inform parents, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

To the extent appropriate in conducting a thorough investigation and/or as legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be annually distributed to all students enrolled in the School District, their parents and/or guardians, and employees. The policy will also be distributed to organizations in the community having cooperative agreements with the schools. Additionally, the policy will be posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

The School District will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

Records and Reports

Records will be maintained on the number and types of reports made, and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the bullying policy.

An annual summary report shall be prepared and presented to the Board, which includes trends in bullying behavior and recommendations on how to further reduce bullying behavior. The annual report will be available to the public.

Education and Training

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of bullying behavior. The District Administrator shall provide appropriate training to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines on bullying will be age and content-appropriate.

APPENDIX D: STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE & SAFETY Policy #7540.03

Technology has fundamentally altered the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in society. As a result, educators are continually adapting their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning to incorporate the vast, diverse, and unique resources available through the Internet. The Board provides technology resources (as defined in Bylaw 0100) to support the educational and professional needs of its students and staff. With respect to students, District Technology Resources afford them the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to learn effectively and live productively in a digital world. The Board provides students with access to the Internet for limited educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services/apps to enhance the instruction delivered to its students. The District's computer network and Internet system do not serve as a public access service or a public forum, and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its limited educational purpose.

The Board regulates the use of District technology resources by principles consistent with applicable local, State, and Federal laws, the District's educational mission, and articulated expectations of student conduct as delineated in the Student Code of Conduct. This policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct govern students' use of District Technology Resources and students' personal communication devices when they are connected to the District computer network, Internet connection, and/or online educational services/apps, or when used while the student is on Board-owned property or at a Board-sponsored activity.

Users are required to refrain from actions that are illegal (such as libel, slander, vandalism, harassment, theft, plagiarism, inappropriate access, and the like) or unkind (such as personal attacks, invasion of privacy, injurious comment, and the like). Because its Technology Resources are not unlimited, the Board has also instituted restrictions aimed at preserving these resources, such as placing limits on use of bandwidth, storage space, and printers.

Users have no right or expectation to privacy when using District Technology Resources (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, e-mails, and records of their online activity when using the District's computer network and/or Internet connection).

The Board may not be able to technologically limit access to services through its technology resources to only those that have been authorized for the purpose of instruction, study and research related to the curriculum. Unlike in the past when educators and community members had the opportunity to review and screen materials to assess their appropriateness for supporting and enriching the curriculum according to adopted guidelines and reasonable selection criteria (taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students who would be exposed to them), access to the Internet, because it serves as a gateway to any publicly available file server in the world, opens classrooms and students to electronic information resources that may not have been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

Pursuant to Federal law, the Board has implemented technology protection measures, that protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, and/or are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act. At the discretion of the Board or the District Administrator, the technology protection measures may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. The technology protection measures may not be disabled at any time that students may be using the District technology resources, if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under the Children's Internet Protection Act. Any student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be subject to discipline.

The Board utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of students and to block/filter access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. "Harmful to minors" is a term defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)(7)) as any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- A. taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- B. depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals;
- C. taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

At the discretion of the Board or the District Administrator, the technology protection measure may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. The technology protection measure may not be disabled at any time that students may be using the District technology resources, if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under the Children's Internet Protection Act. Any student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be subject to discipline.

The District Administrator may temporarily or permanently unblock access to websites or online educational services/apps containing appropriate material if access to such sites has been inappropriately blocked by the technology protection measure. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the protection actions of the technology protection measure.

The District Administrator or Building Principal may disable the technology protection measure to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Parents are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to services and/or resources on the Internet that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to information and communications that they and/or their parents may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable or controversial. Parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet.

Pursuant to Federal law, students shall receive education about the following:

- A. safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- B. the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information;
- C. the consequences of unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking", "harvesting", digital piracy", "data mining", etc.), cyberbullying, and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by students online;
- D. unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding minors.

Staff members shall provide instruction for their students regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified above. Furthermore, staff members will monitor the online activities of students while at school.

Monitoring may include, but is not necessarily limited to, visual observations of online activities during class sessions; or use of specific monitoring tools to review browser history and network, server, and computer logs.

Building Principals are responsible for providing training so that Internet users under their supervision are knowledgeable about this policy and its accompanying guidelines. The Board expects that staff members will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of District technology resources. Such training shall include, but not be limited to, education concerning appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social media, including in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. All users of District technology resources (and their parents if they are minors) are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Students will be assigned a school email account that they are required to utilize for all school-related electronic communications, including those to staff members, peers, and individuals and/or organizations outside the District with whom they are communicating for school-related projects and assignments.

Students are responsible for good behavior when using District technology resources - i.e., behavior comparable to that expected of students when they are in classrooms, school hallways, and other school premises and school-sponsored events. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. The Board does not approve any use of its technology resources that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying guidelines may have their use privileges suspended or revoked, and disciplinary action taken against them. Users are personally responsible and liable, both civilly and criminally, for uses of District technology resources that are not authorized by this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

The Board designates the District Administrator and the administrator(s) responsible for initiating, implementing, and enforcing this policy and its accompanying guidelines as they apply to students' use of District technology resources